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SUBJECT: UN SECRETARIAT AND JAPAN SUGGEST RAISING NEPAL IN
THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

¶1. (SBU) UN Undersecretary for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari will raise possible UN Security Council consideration of the political crisis in Nepal during his February 27 visit to Washington, UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Asia Political Officer Tamrat Samuel told Poloff on February 23. Samuel argued that the recent municipal elections in Nepal, which most of the world condemned as a sham orchestrated by the King to perpetuate his own power, demonstrated that the King had ignored international advice to engage Nepal's political parties with a view to returning the country to constitutional rule. Due to the King's intransigence, Samuel averred, the political parties were growing much closer to the Maoist rebels. He suggested this could ultimately threaten the existence of the monarchy. In order to increase pressure on the King to compromise with the parties, Samuel argued that the international community should consider raising Nepal in the UNSC. If an initial discussion of Nepal in the Council does not get the King's attention, Samuel opined that the UNSC might consider targeted sanctions against the Nepalese regime. Asked if such a step might embolden the Maoist rebels, Samuel averred that the world unfortunately did not have many other options.

¶2. (SBU) During a meeting on February 21, Japanese diplomat Shuntaro Omura asked for USG views on UNSC consideration of Nepal. Echoing many of Samuel's arguments, Omura opined that the world should send a clear message to the King that he cannot continue to rule Nepal as an autocrat. He suggested that the Council could signal its interest in Nepal by requesting a briefing from the Secretariat on the political situation in the Himalayan country, an approach similar to the one taken with regard to Burma several weeks ago. Omura speculated that India, which has traditionally opposed UNSC consideration of Nepal due to fears that Pakistan might then demand Council consideration of Kashmir, might now consider the option in the wake of the King's decision to hold municipal elections. He emphasized that Japan is not wedded to UNSC consideration of Nepal if the USG objects, but does believe the international community must adopt a firmer line with the King. Poloff agreed to convey Omura's views to Washington and seek a response.

¶3. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Post requests Department views on UNSC consideration of Nepal.
BOLTON